



Greetings from Senator Hardiman...

"PROUD PARENT OF A MERIT SCHOLAR" BUMPER STICKERS NOW AVAILABLE

Senate Republicans have put forth the extra effort in helping to preserve and fully fund the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship Program. The scholarship program has helped more than 140,000 hardworking students make college more affordable since its inception in 2000.

Earning the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship is an honor that should be recognized and rewarded. Working hard in school to earn money for either a college education or vocational training provides the right message to students on the importance of academic achievement.

Michigan Merit Award Scholarship winners in the 29th Senate District are able to contact our office and obtain a bumper sticker by calling toll-free at (866) 305-2129 or by e-mail at SenBHardiman@senate.michigan.gov.

SIGN-UP FOR DO-NOT-CALL LIST BEGINS TODAY

Online registration for the national Do-Not-Call list starts Friday, June 27. Consumers can link to the registration site by visiting the Senate Republican website at www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/. In addition, consumers will be able to register from their own home phone beginning July 7. Enrollment is free.

Signing up for the Do-Not-Call registry will make it easier for consumers to stop many unwanted telemarketing calls. Controlling these types of calls consistently ranks as one of the top issues among consumers. In fact, consumer inquiries led the Michigan Legislature to pass a bill to restrict telemarketers and create a Do-Not-Call list late last year.

Lawmakers recognized a single list would provide both state and federal protection, and required the adoption of a federal list if one was created. With the eagerly awaited start of the national Do-Not-Call registry, Michigan consumers can now take steps to block many nuisance phone calls.

Nevertheless, consumers should be cautious about a new wave of scams targeting the widespread interest in the Do-Not-Call registry. Consumers should know that registration with the Federal Trade Commission is free and cannot be done through any private companies.

For more information on how to register for the Do-Not-Call list or how to avoid a Do-Not-Call scam, feel free to contact my office at: 1-888-305-2129.

'CLAIM IT CORRECTLY' LEGISLATION PASSES SENATE

The State Senate recently approved Senate Bill 520, legislation that closes a real tax loophole and collects millions in lost revenue from unlawful homestead property exemptions. The Principal Residence Assurance Program is a major component of the Senate Republican proposal to balance the State's budget without raising taxes.

Many out-of-state residents who own vacation homes in Michigan, and many residents who own multiple homes in the state, have duplicate exemptions in violation of Michigan law, sometimes unknowingly. Included in the legislation is a program that would provide an incentive to allow counties and local units of government to be involved in the examination of principal residence exemptions. The program is expected to collect at least \$40 million in its first year.

STATEWIDE CAMPAIGN WARNING OF DRINKING AND DRIVING BEGINS

A two-week statewide advertising campaign is now in effect, putting motorists on notice that an intensive drunk driving crackdown is just around the corner. The radio and television ads begin a week before the start of the "You Drink & You Drive. You Lose," national mobilization.

Federal traffic safety funds will pay for the \$240,000 ad campaign in Michigan, targeting those motorists most likely to drive drunk: young men. No state general fund money is being used to support the effort. The U.S. Congress also provided \$11 million to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to produce and place national advertisements in English and Spanish to coincide with the crackdown.

The two-week national drunk driving mobilization runs June 27 through July 13 and will involve more than 500 Michigan law enforcement agencies that will make drunk driving enforcement a priority. Last year, 30 people died in Michigan over the July 4 holiday, with 44 percent of those fatalities involving alcohol.

CHARTER SCHOOL OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT PASSES SENATE

Legislation ensuring that Michigan's charter schools are consistently overseen and provide steadfast accountability was passed by the Senate last week. The provisions guarantee numerous guidelines that will ensure proper management of 240 new charter schools over the next 10 years, including 15 new urban high school academies in Detroit.

Among those provisions are: subjecting the schools to the general supervision and leadership of the State Board of Education, filing copies of the charter contract with the Michigan Department of Education, making available for public inspection their annual budgets, budget amendments and quarterly financial statements, complying with state and federal special education requirements and mandating the education management companies to provide the school's governing board with detailed information regarding teachers, administrators and support staff

assigned to work at the school. Senate Bill 393 now awaits consideration in the House Education Committee.

ANTI-SPAM MEASURES PASS SENATE

Internet surfers ranging from small children to senior citizens can breathe a sigh of relief thanks to measures passed by the Senate that protects consumers from unsolicited bulk and commercial e-mail, known as Spam.

Senate Bill 357, the "Electronic Mail Solicitation Act," would create the Electronic Mail Solicitation Program within the Department of Consumer and Industry Services. SB 357 would also require the program to maintain a list of e-mail addresses of people who do not want to receive unsolicited commercial e-mail; require senders of unsolicited commercial e-mail to register with the program and pay a fee; and require senders to include a valid method for recipients to opt-out of future e-mails.

House Bill 4519, a companion bill to SB 357, would require all spam advertisement messages to be identified by the insertion of "ADV:" SB 357 awaits consideration from the House of Representatives while HB 4519 will now be sent back to the House for concurrence.

MICHIGAN RANKS 4TH IN NATION FOR FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Lowering the tax burden on residents and businesses has placed Michigan at the top of the nation in tax policy, according to a report issued by USA Today earlier this week.

The report analyzed the financial health of each state from 1997-2002, determined by three categories: tax system, bond rating, and spending restraint. States were assigned up to four stars in each category, with four stars being the highest possible score and one star being the lowest.

Michigan received the highest scores possible in the categories of tax system and bond rating, and two stars for spending restraint. Michigan was ranked as the fourth overall best fiscally responsible state behind only Utah, Delaware and Georgia.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Hardiman Herald by Senator Bill Hardiman is designed to provide residents and organizations with a timely update of his activity in Lansing. If you have any questions or do not wish to receive this e-mail, please contact Senator Hardiman's office.

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